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HOUSEKEEPERS' CHAT

Thursday, September 17, 1936

(FOR BROADCAST USE ONLY)

Subject: "MEALS FOR THE TWO-PERSON FAMILY." Approved by the Bureau of Home Economics, United States Department of Agriculture.

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Today, homemakers, I want to relay some good information from the Bureau of Home Economics for the "two-person" family. "Two in the family" mean special problems when it comes to buying food, and to cooking it.

Here's what the experts say about it: "Meals for two always present a problem of how to buy economically. It is not economical to buy or to cook, for example, just two or three potatoes. Small cans of tomatoes, corn, beans, or fruit are more expensive per pound or per pint than the larger cans. But how large a can is the best to buy? Lack of storage space makes it hard, especially in city apartments, to buy food in economical quantities. Foresight in meal planning seems to be the best answer to the problem of buying economically for two."

Well, there you are, homemakers -- the way to save money is to use foresight. The next point in cooking for two concerns cooking utensils. You can cook more economically with pots and pans built for two. Big ones may fool your eye and tempt you to cook too much. For two people, big pans are not economical. On the other hand, it may be economical to cook, for example, more than enough for one meal. A shoulder of pork or lamb, or a pot roast of beef, is good for slicing cold the second day, and also for dishes like hash and shepherd's pie, or stuffed green peppers.

Ground fresh meat is a bargain for the family of two. Half a pound will make a good meal, in meat patties wrapped in a strip of bacon, or in meat loaf. If you use the oven for meat loaf, make a larger quantity and use it sliced cold. Liver is another bargain because you can get just the amount you want. Small fish is good -- or fish fillet or steak of large fish, and canned salmon or tuna fish, herring, or sardines.

When it comes to vegetables -- except potatoes, carrots, cabbage, or others that keep well -- it is better to buy for the day if you can. However, you can use left-overs in many ways. Cold cooked vegetables make appetizing salads. Left-over spinach goes very well into cream-of-spinach soup, or spinach souffle. Another appetizing dish includes left-over carrots cut small and served with peas in a rich cheese sauce, well-flavored with onions. Still another good mixture is of vegetables, creamed or covered with a cream sauce, heated in the oven with a layer of bread crumbs over the top. Grated cheese, too, if you like.

Now I'm going to quote a bachelor girl who has cooked for herself and her room-mate in a tiny kitchenette. If anybody's an authority on cooking for two, she ought to be.

"Some of our best dishes for kitchenette cookery," she says, "are the all-in-one main dishes that combine meat, a starchy food, and vegetables in one pot. We have very little cooking space, so we concentrate all our energies on this one dish. We make it in generous amounts and we make it delicious. Then we can round out the meal with foods that need little or no cooking -- a fruit cup or tomato juice to start, or a crisp salad, or some fruit, fresh or canned, for dessert."

One of her favorite dishes is a variation of the famous Welsh rabbit, made with canned tomatoes, seasoned with a little chopped celery, green pepper, and onion browned in butter, and cheese of course. Another good main dish includes tomatoes, corn, and cheese on toast.

When both members of a two-person family work away from home, it is especially important to plan meals for quick and easy cooking. Nobody wants to spend a long time getting dinner after she's worked in town all day. So, choose the right thing to cook, and the right way to cook it, and stay out of the kitchenette as much as possible on hot days.

Remember that such vegetables as potatoes, carrots, and turnips cook quickly when cut into small pieces; that cabbage, shredded, cooks in about five minutes; and that raw salads are refreshing, nutritious, and easily prepared. And for dessert, what could be simpler than fruit, with a cookie or two or a plain cup cake?

But that's enough about planning meals for the two-person family. Now I want to talk about cabbage. And why not? We're practically a nation of cabbage eaters; in fact, we eat more cabbage than any other vegetable, except potatoes.

Somebody asked me this morning how to cook cabbage so that it will have a delicate flavor, and I promised to give her the answer in three little words. These words are "short-time cooking." If you cook cabbage for five, ten, or maybe fifteen minutes, it's bound to be delicate -- in flavor, texture, and color. More important still, short-time cooking prevents the loss of food value that comes from long cooking of vegetables rich in vitamin C.

By the way, have you ever served cabbage with sausage? Fry the sausages, and arrange them on a hot platter with chopped cabbage which has been cooked for six minutes, in a little fat. Cabbage scalloped with bread crumbs and cheese is another good dish.

And here's a combination that may be new to some of you -- Sweet and Sour Cabbage -- just cabbage, red or white, cooked with sour apples and seasoned with brown sugar and vinegar.

In the Near East, and elsewhere in Europe, cabbage rolls are a favorite. For Cabbage Rolls, each separate leaf is first wilted, and then folded around a mixture of chopped meat and bread crumbs, or meat and rice. The rolls are then cooked in a little water in a baking dish, and served with gravy, or perhaps they're cooked in tomato juice.

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